

GLOSSARY

Apportioned population: In the evaluation of drinking water target populations associated with a blended system, that portion of the population evaluated as being served by an individual well or intake within the system.

Aquifer: A saturated subsurface zone from which drinking water is drawn.

Blended system: A drinking water supply system which can or does combine (e.g., via connecting valves) water from more than one well or surface water intake, or from a combination of wells and intakes.

CERCLA: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980.

CERCLA Information System: CERCLIS, EPA's computerized inventory and tracking system for potential hazardous waste sites.

CERCLIS: CERCLA Information System.

Coastal tidal waters: Surface water body type that includes embayments, harbors, sounds, estuaries, back bays, etc. Such water bodies are in the interval seaward from the mouths of rivers and landward from the 12-mile baseline marking the transition to the ocean water body type.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980

Legislation that established the Federal Superfund for response to uncontrolled releases of hazardous substances to the environment.

Contaminated soil: Soil onto which available evidence indicates that a hazardous substance was spilled, spread, disposed, or deposited.

Depth to aquifer: The vertical distance between the deepest point at which hazardous substances are suspected and the top of the shallowest aquifer that supplies drinking water.

Distance to surface water: The shortest distance that runoff would follow from a source to surface water.

Drinking water population: The number of residents, workers, and students who drink water drawn from wells or surface water intakes located within target distance limits.

Drums: Portable containers designed to hold a standard 55-gallon volume of wastes.

Emergency remonse: See "removal."

Factor: The basic element of site assessment requiring data collection and evaluation for scoring purposes.

Factor category: A set of related factors. Each pathway consists of three factor categories -- likelihood of release or exposure, targets, and waste characteristics.

Federal Register: Daily publication of the Government Printing Office; contains public notices, rules, and regulations issued by the Federal Government. Cited as "< volume > FR < page >."

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Fishery: An area of a surface water body from which food chain organisms are taken or could be taken for human consumption on a subsistence, sporting, or commercial basis. Food chain organisms include fish, shellfish, crustaceans, amphibians, and amphibious reptiles.

FR: Federal Register.

GEMS: Geographical Exposure Modeling System.

Geographical Exposure Modeling System: Population database maintained by EPA's Office of Toxic Substances; provides residential populations in specified distance rings around a point location.

Hazard Ranking System: EPA's principal mechanism for placing sites on the NPL.

Hazardous constituent: Hazardous substance.

Hazardous substance: Material defined as a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant in CERCLA Sections 101(14) and 101(33).

Hazardous waste: Any material suspected to contain a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant that is or was in a source.

HRS: Hazard Ranking System.

Karst: A kind of terrain with characteristics of relief and drainage arising from a high degree of rock solubility. The majority of karst conditions occur in limestone areas, but karst may also occur in areas of dolomite, gypsum, or salt deposits. Features associated with karst terrain may include irregular topography, abrupt ridges, sinkholes, caverns, abundant springs, disappearing streams, and a general lack of a well-developed surface drainage system of tributaries and streams.

Lake: A type of surface water body which includes:

- ! Natural and artificially-made lakes or ponds that lie along rivers or streams (but excluding the Great Lakes).
- ! Isolated but perennial lakes, ponds, and wetlands.
- ! Static water channels or oxbow lakes contiguous to streams or rivers.
- ! Streams or small rivers, without diking, that merge into surrounding perennially-inundated wetlands.
- ! Wetlands contiguous to water bodies defined as lakes are considered to be part of the lake.

Landfill: An engineered (by excavation or construction) or natural hole in the ground into which wastes have been disposed by backfilling, or by contemporaneous soil deposition with waste disposal, covering wastes from view.

Land treatment: Landfarming or other land treatment method of waste management in which liquid wastes or sludges are spread over land and tilled, or liquids are injected at shallow depths into soils.

National Contingency Plan: Regulation that establishes roles, responsibilities, and authorities for responding to hazardous substance releases. The NCP established the HRS as the principal mechanism for placing sites on the NPL.

National Priorities List: Under the Superfund program, the list of releases and potential releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants that appear to pose the greatest threat to public health, welfare, and the environment.

NCP: National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, commonly known as the National Contingency Plan.

NFRAP: No further remedial action planned; site disposition decision that further response under the Federal Superfund is not necessary.

No suspected release: A professional judgement conclusion based on site and pathway conditions indicating that a hazardous substance is not likely to have been released to the environment. (No suspected release is the PA term analogous to the HRS "potential to release.")

NPL: National Priorities List.

Ocean: A type of surface water body which includes:

- ! Ocean areas seaward from a baseline distance of 12 miles from shore.
- ! The Great Lakes, along with wetlands contiguous to them.

PA: Preliminary assessment.

PA-Score: EPA's computer program that automates PA site scoring.

Pathway: The environmental medium through which a hazardous substance may threaten targets. The PA evaluates the migration and threat potential through the ground water, surface water, air, and soil exposure pathways.

Pile: Any non-containerized accumulation above the ground surface of solid, non-flowing wastes; includes open dumps. Some types of piles are: Chemical Waste Pile -- consists primarily of discarded chemical products, by-products, radioactive wastes, or used or unused feedstocks; Scrap Metal or Junk Pile -- consists primarily of scrap metal or discarded durable goods such as appliances, automobiles, auto parts, or batteries, composed of materials suspected to contain or have contained a hazardous substance; Tailings Pile -- consists primarily of any combination of overburden from a mining operation and tailings from a mineral mining, beneficiation, or processing operation; Trash Pile -- consists primarily of paper, garbage, or discarded non-durable goods which are suspected to contain or have contained a hazardous substance.

PPE: Probable point of entry.

Preliminary assessment: Initial stage of site assessment under Superfund; designed to distinguish between sites that pose little or no threat to human health and the environment and sites that require further investigation.

PREscore: EPA's computer program that automates site scoring with the Hazard Ranking System.

Primary target: A target which, based on professional judgement of site and pathway conditions and target characteristics, has a relatively high likelihood of exposure to a hazardous substance. (Primary target is the PA term analogous to the HRS target exposed to Level I or Level II actual contamination.)

Probable point of entry: The point at which runoff from the site most likely enters surface water.

RCRA: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.

Removal: An action taken to eliminate, control, or otherwise mitigate a threat posed to the public health or environment due to release or threatened release of a hazardous substance. Removals are relatively short-term actions to respond to situations requiring immediate action.

Resident: A person whose place of residence (full- or part-time) is within the target distance limit.

Resident individual: Under the soil exposure pathway, a resident or student within 200 feet of any area of suspected contamination associated with the site.

Resident population: Under the soil exposure pathway, the number of residents and students within 200 feet of any area of suspected contamination associated with the site.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976: Legislation that established cradle-to-grave accountability for hazardous wastes, from point of generation to point of ultimate disposal.

SARA: Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986.

Secondary target: A target which, based on professional judgement of site and pathway conditions and target characteristics, has a relatively low likelihood of exposure to a hazardous substance. (Secondary target is the PA term analogous to the HRS target exposed to potential contamination.)

Sensitive environment: A terrestrial or aquatic resource, fragile natural setting, or other area with unique or highly-valued environmental or cultural features.

SI: Site inspection.

Site: The area consisting of the aggregation of sources, the areas between sources, and areas that may have been contaminated due to migration from sources; site boundaries are independent of property boundaries.

Site inspection: Second stage of site assessment under Superfund, conducted on sites that receive a further action recommendation after the PA; builds on PA information and typically includes sampling to identify hazardous substances, releases, and contaminated targets; identifies sites that pose the greatest threats to human health and the environment.

Source: An area where a hazardous substance may have been deposited, stored, disposed, or placed. Also, soil that may have become contaminated as a result of hazardous substance migration. In general, however, the volumes of air, ground water, surface water, and surface water sediments that may have become contaminated through migration are not considered sources.

Stream flow: The average rate of flow of a water body, expressed in cubic feet per second (cfs).

Stream or river: A type of surface water body which includes:

- ! Perennially-flowing waters from point of origin to the ocean or to coastal tidal waters, whichever comes first, and wetlands contiguous to these flowing waters.
- ! Aboveground portions of disappearing rivers.
- ! Artificially-made ditches only insofar as they perennially flow into other surface water.
- ! Intermittently-flowing waters and contiguous intermittently-flowing ditches in areas where mean annual precipitation is less than 20 inches.

Student: A full- or part-time attendee of a daycare facility or educational institution located within the target distance limit.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986: Legislation which extended the Federal Superfund program and mandated revisions to the HRS.

Surface impoundment: A topographic depression, excavation, or diked area, primarily formed from earthen materials (lined or unlined) and designed to hold accumulated liquid wastes, wastes containing free liquids, or sludges that were not backfilled or otherwise covered during periods of deposition; depression may be dry if deposited liquid has evaporated, volatilized or leached, or wet with exposed liquid; structures that may be more specifically described as lagoon pond, aeration pit, settling pond, tailings pond, sludge pit, etc.; also a surface impoundment that has been covered with soil after the final deposition of waste materials (i.e., buried or backfilled).

Surface water: A naturally-occurring, perennial water body; also, some artificially-made and/or intermittently-flowing water bodies. See "water body type" and subsequent definitions for more detail.

Suspected release: A professional judgement conclusion based on site and pathway conditions indicating that a hazardous substance is likely to have been released to the environment. (Suspected release is the PA term analogous to the HRS "observed release.")

Tanks and non-drum containers: Any stationary device, designed to contain accumulated wastes, constructed primarily of fabricated materials (such as wood, concrete, steel, or plastic) that provide structural support; any portable or mobile device in which waste is stored or otherwise handled.

Target: A physical or environmental receptor that is within the target distance limit for a particular pathway. Targets may include wells and surface water intakes supplying drinking water, fisheries, sensitive environments, and resources.

Target distance limit The maximum distance over which targets are evaluated. The target distance limit varies by pathway: ground water and air pathways -- a 4-mile radius around the site; surface water pathway -- 15 miles downstream from the probable point of entry to surface water; soil exposure pathway -- 200 feet (for the resident population threat) and 1 mile (for the nearby population threat) from areas of known or suspected contamination.

Target population: The human population associated with the site and/or its targets. Target populations consist of those people who use target wells or surface water intakes supplying drinking water, consume food chain species taken from target fisheries, or are regularly present on the site or within target distance limits.

Terrestrial sensitive environment A terrestrial resource, fragile natural setting, or other area with unique or highly-valued environmental or cultural features.

USF&WS: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

USGS: U.S. Geological Survey.

Water body type: Classification of a surface water body. Water body types include: streams and rivers; lakes; oceans (includes the Great Lakes); and coastal tidal waters. See the specific definition of each water body type for more detail.

Wetland: A type of sensitive environment characterized as an area that is sufficiently inundated or saturated by surface or ground water to support vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

Worker: Under the soil exposure pathway, a person who is employed on a full- or part-time basis on the property on which the site is located. Under all other pathways, a person whose place of full- or part-time employment is within the target distance limit.